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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE PATH

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXXVI—No. 8 **June, 1948**

IN the work which we have undertaken together, it matters not whether "we" fail or succeed: Our purpose has been and will be that the Work shall go on. We can throw—each one of us—our best into the effort; the rest is in other and stronger hands. Our "best" may not be great, but if the motive is there, even to hold our ground is victory in some contingencies. It is, then, to the Teachings that attention has to be called—not to ourselves who are only handing them on as best we can. Theosophy pure and simple is the standard by which efforts may be applied and errors combated, so it must always be kept in evidence as the source of all right effort. —R.C.

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A U M

In the air or in water no mark is seen of the passage of birds or fishes; so is entirely inscrutable the passage of the knowers of the Self. —SANKARACHARYA

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXVI June, 1948 No. 8

A MAN OF NOW

ROBERT CROSBIE, founder of the United Lodge of Theosophists and of this Magazine, was one of those rare individuals whose stature increases with the years and whose influence mounts steadily as if death had been a beginning instead of an end. "Our ideals," he wrote, "are never reached: they continually *precede* us." So with Mr. Crosbie himself. Although U.L.T. has expanded in membership and extent in the generation since his passing on June 25, 1919, we can imagine that if today he were to survey the United Lodges of Theosophists and their various radiating activities, he would merely be *confirmed* in his estimate of the potentialities of the program. In his view, progress was made only when past accomplishments became the focus for newer and stronger efforts. He considered success to be as temporary as failure, and proceeded upon the assumption that neither success nor failure—as these are understood in ordinary life—is useful except to indicate by contrast a course of effort which is beyond reach of both effects.

It is a teaching of *The Secret Doctrine* that time is an illusion produced by the shifting of our consciousness from one state to another, and does not exist for an Ego whose consciousness is unbroken by the transit between states and planes of being. Following this is the observation that "Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change—or the same—for the billionth part of a second." In the metaphysics of duration, as distinguished from time, may be seen the philosophical basis for the position assumed by Mr. Crosbie in relation to the theosophical

movement. That movement, being continuous, lifts those who are immersed in its *duration* above the illusion of time. When the unchanging reality of Theosophy, its Knowers, and their efforts on behalf of humanity is kept before the mind's eye, one does not experience a past to be regretted, nor a future clouded with apprehension.

U.L.T. was founded to uphold the original program of the theosophical movement, which had been restored to public function by H. P. Blavatsky in 1875. For some of the so-called "successors" in the theosophical societies, after H.P.B. had left the scene, the original program was a thing of the "past"; they considered themselves authorities on the "present," and had all manner of notions about the "future." This attitude, stemming from ignorance of the philosophy of Theosophy, was necessarily impractical and self-limiting, and those caught in this fallacious conception found it impossible to preserve any stability of aim, purpose, and teaching. Mr. Crosbie, on the other hand, found no warrant for separating the "region of ideals which we call the future" from the "region of memories that we name the past," or either one from the region of action, the present.

The Friendly Philosopher, which contains a number of his letters written in the early days of U.L.T., makes it abundantly clear that in his view past, present and future must be evaluated as a whole. His day-by-day commentary on U.L.T. policy, as one or another issue called for a specific definition of principles and plan, reveals a mind in which memory, will, and imagination operated in concert to produce wise action. He could not consider an ideal apart from efforts to realize it, a memory that yielded no lesson for the present, a line of conduct which failed to unite past experience and philosophical aspiration. These, for him, involved sentiment more than good judgment, and invited motives of expediency in place of responsibility.

The ability to encompass details while not losing sight of the end in view is the difference between a plan and the program through which it becomes effective. Mr. Crosbie guided and guarded the work of U.L.T. as long as he lived, and his example and writings continued as the line of impersonal direction for Associates down through the years. If no slightest lapse into ways and means un-

fitting to the work at hand was overlooked in those who sought his counsel, it is equally certain that every spark of understanding kindled in the members was warmly greeted, and mightily encouraged by his good will. His careful notice of constructive and obstructive tendencies involves far more than praise or blame of persons. Knowing the *Bhagavad-Gita,* Mr. Crosbie could hardly have justified himself in feeding the feelings of pride and regret, for these emotions are inconsistent with philosophy and inhibit what Krishna defines as spiritual action. In criticizing a policy, therefore, Mr. Crosbie looked "forward" and outlined the obstacles it would create in the path of the movement, even though these might not manifest for some time. In commending a course taken, he also spoke as from the future, contemplating in a small beginning not its size but its inherent worth.

The counsel of "the friendly philosopher," given from the standpoint of philosophical time, or duration, is of unchanging value, and constitutes, as far as U.L.T. is concerned, the immortality of Robert Crosbie—the natural outcome of his life, of his work and purpose, his convictions, his principles, and the philosophy by means of which he sought to integrate all these in the practice of right action. This was a man who did not believe in the future: he believed that the future is Now. This was also a man who did not believe in the past: nothing that is real has ever passed away, nor can it ever disappear. This is a man who does not belong to the past. He may be called a man of the Now, for he heralds the day when men will no longer wait for the future to begin work in the "region of ideals."

"The Real Person"

The real person or thing does not consist solely of what is seen at any particular moment, but is composed of the sum of all its various and changing conditions from its appearance in the material form to its disappearance from the earth. Persons and things present momentarily to our sense a cross-section, as it were, of their total selves, as they pass through time and space (as matter) on their way from one eternity to another: and these two constitute that "duration" in which alone anything has true existence, were our senses but able to cognize it there. —H.P.B.

THE SECOND YEAR

THE first number of this magazine naturally appealed to the future to show whether there was any need for its existence, any field ripe already unto the harvest. The beginning of the second volume may be claimed to mark the turning point of *The Path,* in its upward spiral from the regions of experiment to the plane of assured and growing success; and while the Editor tenders his hearty thanks to the friends who have loyally served it with pen and purse, he deems it proper to express his conviction that a mighty, if unseen, power has been behind it from the first, and will continue to aid it. In no other way can its phenomenal success be accounted for. Starting without money or regular contributors, treating of matters not widely known and too little understood, entering a field entirely new, and appealing, as was feared, to a comparatively small class, it has steadily grown in favor from the very first number; none of the ordinary means of pushing it into notice have been resorted to, and not ten dollars spent in advertising; yet new names are added to its list almost daily, and of the hundreds of its old subscribers only three have withdrawn. In this country its regular circulation extends from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate, and from the Green Mountains to the Crescent City; it reaches through England, France, Germany, Italy and Russia; it is read alike beneath the North Star in Sweden and under the Southern Cross in New Zealand; it is a welcome guest on the immemorial shores of India, and has received the cordial approval of the heads of the Theosophical Society in Adyar. It would be impossible not to feel gratification at such results, even were it an ordinary money-making enterprise; how much more when it is remembered that it is devoted, not to any selfish end, but to the spread of that idea of universal Brotherhood which aims to benefit all, from highest to lowest.

The Path will continue its policy of independent devotion to the Cause of Theosophy, without professing to be the organ either of the Society or of any Branch; it is loyal to the great Founders of the Society, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion. The work it has on hand, and the end it keeps in view, are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or

NOTE.—This editorial by Wm. Q. Judge opened Volume II of *The Path,* April, 1887, and is the source in part of the U.L.T. Declaration.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

inclination to take part in side issues; yet its columns are open to all Theosophists who may desire to express their views on matters of real importance to the cause in which all should be interested. New features will be added as the need seems to arise; the first will probably be a department devoted to answers to correspondents. A large and constantly increasing number of letters of inquiry are received, and the present editorial staff finds it impossible to answer each separately; besides which, many of them naturally relate to the same or similar matters. By thus printing general replies, not only will the inquirers be answered, but others may have their unspoken questions replied to, or a similar line of thought will be suggested, or other views be elicited, to the mutual advantage of writers and readers.

In this joyous season of returning Spring, *The Path* wishes all its readers a "Happy New Year" in the fullest and best sense of the term,—a progress in the knowledge of the great and vital truths of Theosophy, a truer realization of The Self, a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

Why Existence?

If every one starts from and returns into "That" (spirit), what is the object of existence in matter? Is this the only way to fulfil the soul's desire?

W.Q.J.—The questioner should enquire a little further as to the meaning of "matter," for if thereby mere mortal material life is meant, the truth about matter has not been grasped. The worlds of heaven, of the "devas" or "angels," are worlds of matter, and yet such worlds are sought after by those who ask the question under consideration.

Furthermore the occultists hold that *spirit* has not as yet incarnated fully in the existing race, but will do so in future ages; then men can say that they have a spirit. At present the men who are incarnated spirits are Adepts or Mahatmas. Toward the moment of this grand incarnation we are hastening, and the experience now being undergone is to settle the question whether we will become fit for such a tremendous event or whether we will fail. Assuredly all are called to this grand work, but just as certainly some will not be chosen.

—*The Theosophical Forum,* May, 1889

MODERN STUDY OF HISTORY

THERE have been some modern historians, who, while subject to a prejudice against the full entrance of philosophy into history, have nonetheless tried to make history somewhat more meaningful. The new investigation is usually a probing of the "sociological forces" which mold the external forms we call economic and political institutions. Digging deeper than their predecessors into the process of historical causation, they announce that the culture, the literature, and the way of living of the common man have been the fundamental causes behind human events. This movement has been loosely called "the new history," a term made popular by James Harvey Robinson. It is a scholarly reaction to the view of the English historian Seeley that "history is nothing but past politics."

The "new historians" have revealed that prevailing beliefs determine the ideas of all but the most exceptional thinkers. And this, indeed, is no new discovery. Hegel, a historian of quite other views, remarked that "every philosophy belongs to its age, and is subject to its limitations." Modern appreciation of this truth is expressed in the popularity of the phrase, "climate of opinion," which received its latest currency at the hands of Alfred North Whitehead, the eminent philosopher and mathematician. But Dr. Whitehead did not invent the phrase; he borrowed it from John Glanvil, an English writer of the seventeenth century, friend and admirer of Dr. Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist. In the *Vanity of Dogmatizing,* a noble appeal for free thought, for intellectual humility and for experimental science, Glanvil wrote:—". . . they that never peep'd beyond the common belief in which their easie understandings were at first indoctrinated, are indubitably assur'd of the Truth, and comparative excellency of their receptions . . . the larger Souls, that have travail'd the divers *Climates of Opinions,* are more cautious in their resolves, and more sparing to determine." The clear perspective of a "mystical" writer, it seems, becomes acceptable only when echoed by a "scientific" philosopher.

The "scientific" historian is limited by his philosophical environment, the general "climate of opinion," which dictates that all problems of ethics must be dealt with as problems of habit and cus-

tom. He consistently evades the historical fact that the moral problem—that of evaluating conduct as good or evil—is the vital issue of every age. "We know more than ever was known, and are convinced that we know nothing of what we most wish to know," is the honest conclusion of W. MacNeile Dixon, author of *The Human Situation.* "Scientific" sociologists and historians persist in ignoring the very questions about which we "most wish to know."

If there is more to man than matter—if there is a man of mind and spirit evolving through the physical, then the forces behind the development of history must be dominantly intellectual and spiritual —a possibility which materialism refuses to consider. Further, if this is a metaphysical rather than a physical world, only knowledge transcending physical experience can answer the question: "What constitutes true morality?" If man be known as a spiritual being, then his actions can be evaluated in terms of their consonance with the objective of soul evolution.

Philosophers are not oblivious to the need for a moral standard in critical history, but feel this must be sought in compilations of tribal custom and similar anthropological and sociological research. This involves history in a relativistic circle. Ernest Troeltsch, foremost of recent German historiographers, speaks of the limitations of empirical studies of morals:—

"The great obstacle to this procedure lies in the fact that ethics itself must derive its knowledge of values from the facts of history, and can furnish nothing more than a critical delimitation and adjustment of those values. We are thus confronted with a logical circle: we must interpret history by the degree in which it approximates to ethical values, and at the same time we must derive those ethical values from history."

The only escape from this "circle" lies in recognition of the fact that history must take its ethical principles from moral philosophy, and not hope to discover them by induction. Then, to have ethical value, history must illuminate right principles of conduct by specific examples. In the words of Fontenelle, a historian and philosopher of the eighteenth century: "History is good for nothing if it be not united to morality. . . . It is certain that one may know all that man did and still be ignorant of man himself."

It may indeed be that no one save a sage possessed of phenomenal wisdom can entirely escape the "specious present," but it is possible for sincere scientific scholars to *attempt* formulation of universal history. Arnold Toynbee, described in a *Harper's* article (February, 1947) as "The Boldest Historian" has produced a ten-volume *Study of History* which evaluates the major trends of every civilization accessible to the scholar and seeks to delineate the rhythmical processes of their life and death. Mr. Toynbee is puzzling to many orthodox historians, as the *Harper's* writer, Granville Hicks, observes:

> A reason for the expert's uneasiness in dealing with Toynbee lies in the fact that his approach to history is imaginative, as theirs almost invariably is not, and is therefore, in the good sense, literary. Underlying all his professional erudition is a deep familiarity with classical literature, the English Bible, the mythology and folklore of ancient and modern times, and the poetry of his own land. Historians who pride themselves on being scientific are disturbed when he cites a legend or quotes a poem, not, as they might do, to document a trend, but to suggest a truth. Respect for the imagination is implicit on every page, and if at a crucial point in his argument he quotes from Blake, Goethe, Francis Thompson, and St. John, it is because these are the men who seem to him to have the truest understanding of the question at issue.

Toynbee believes that "the period of breakdown" for Western civilization has already been passed. According to his formulation of the historical process, this means a long, long period of disintegration, marked by two trends of conflict—"Schism in the Body Social" and "Schism in the Soul." Mr. Hicks points out a connecting link between this present stage of our history, as described by Toynbee, and our increased number of schizophrenics:

> "Schism in the soul" is as familiar to us as "schism in society." Indeed, psychoanalysts—Toynbee would not appreciate support from "the callowest of our Western scientific disciplines"—point to the alarming increase of schizophrenia, the divided mind. Toynbee discusses the phenomenon at length as it manifests itself in art, language, religion, and politics.

For many years Dr. Hutchins of the University of Chicago has pointed to the need of drawing moral conclusions from historical research. Appreciation of the moral content of history leads naturally

to the search for a standard. To know which are the "good" circumstances and events, we need a measure of goodness. There is only one desideratum agreed upon by all those who are concerned with the moral aspects of history, and that is the general welfare. What, then, is "good" for mankind?

The prevalent variety of "materialism" suggests to us that each individual is adapted to seek his enjoyment differently, often at the expense of someone else, because of a law called the struggle for existence. From this standpoint, how unjust, even stupid, to pass moral judgments on biological automatons who have fought bloody wars to satisfy natural urges, or because, perhaps, nature short-changed them in the matter of a certain gland secretion! No moral interpretation of history is possible from such a basis. However well-intentioned, historical writers can but sketch the framework of what moral history must include, for they cannot write it until they adopt a fundamentally different attitude concerning the nature of man and the enduring significance of his acts in the moral development of soul. For instance, there can be no physical explanation for the forgetfulness of self that betokens true altruism and brings the greatest benefits to humanity. How can there be any real history while scientific method ignores what materialism fails to explain? The sociological historians hope that individuals may be brought to act in behalf of the "total situation"—the whole of mankind—but on what ground do they expect a purely physical creature to strive for this spiritual ideal?

Some historians have realized that there are other forces than the physical in the drama of human destiny. Hegel, despite short-sighted applications of his principles, saw the law of cyclic change working in the development of civilizations; and while the full import of Karma remained for him "dark and inscrutable," since he recognized but one aspect of this law, he nevertheless found in *Spirit* or *Idea* the primal cause which unfolds its potentialities through changing forms. This idea is developed by Troeltsch:—

> Each historical phenomenon is to be estimated by reference only to that degree of approximation to the Idea which is set before it and is possible to it. In this way every epoch has a relative justification, though it must, at the same time, be judged in the light of an absolute end. This shows the necessary relativity of the phil-

> osophy of history, and yet makes it possible that the relative shall appear to be included in the movement towards the absolute. The absolute *in* the relative, yet not fully and finally in it, but always pressing towards fresh forms of self-expression, and so effecting the mutual criticism of its relative individualizations—such is the last word of the philosophy of history.

From the Theosophical view of history, such a formulation follows naturally. The Absolute in man is spirit, pressing to fresh forms of self-expression through the mental nature, the psychical nature, and the physical. Every intelligent form of whatever degree contains the essence of this same spirit, which is simply the power to unfold. The purpose of evolution on earth is the acquirement of soul-experience—an ever-deeper awakening to the interdependence of all sentient life. Through his various instruments, man may contact all degrees of manifested intelligence and influence them to a higher evolution of their own. When this continuing spiritual being, far older than any form he may temporarily inhabit, realizes his responsibility to the whole of evolution, he becomes one of those great lovers of humanity whose unselfish achievements illumine the path of history. It is indeed philosophical ideas that have been the rulers of the world. Economic, political and social difficulties are all traceable to the egocentricity of human beings. Man is influenced to act according to his concept of self, and by the extent of his perception of inter-relationship with other selves. Recognition of physical brotherhood must spring from the perception of the identity of spirit, wherever present, and the nature of its unfoldment through an infinite evolution governed by the inherent law of inter-dependence. The theosophist points to Karma and Reincarnation as the truly "revolutionary ideas" that may stem the present destruction of men, nations and ideals, because these doctrines provide a self-compelling basis for right ethics.

Theosophy, under whatever guise presented, has been behind all movements that have been conceived to help the development of spiritual man. The future course of human events depends primarily on recognition, by an enduring man, of an enduring universe in which he is the causative agent. To recognize those bases of action that have worked detriment in the past, to understand something of that vast sweep which the whole of history represents, means devotion to philosophy. This philosophy may rule the world

or it may continue to be subordinate to the level of contemporary prejudice. The choice is with those who possess the knowledge of *all* forces in history.

Speculative Studies

It is the fashion nowadays to make speculative studies of the unrevealed sensations of men whose lives are long over, and to decide how they thought and felt, with authority, as if distance lent not enchantment but distinctness to the mental vision. We pique ourselves upon being more impartial than the contemporaries, who either hated the man, abused him, or loved him, and could see no evil in him. It is our high privilege to be able to see how good he was, and yet that he was not good, at the same moment; but this privilege, like all others, has its disadvantages. If the contemporary sees too close, and is too ready to form a superficial judgment from facts alone, we are too ready to rely upon our theories of human nature, and our supposed superior insight into the workings of the mind, as giving an entirely new colour and meaning to these facts; and nothing, I think, is more general in history and criticism, than the confusion which arises from our refusal to accept the simpler interpretation of a great man's character, and the pains we give ourselves to find every person "complex," and every important event full of "complications." To be single-minded, once one of the highest commendations possible, has ceased to appear sublime enough for the imagination, which demands a labyrinth of conflicting motives, through which it can have the satisfaction of picking its enlightened way. The meaner pleasure with which the ordinary observer often exerts himself to lessen a heroic figure, and show how a great purpose may be brought down by dilutions of small motives, is perhaps more general still; but this latter is not a sentiment upon which it is agreeable to dwell.

—Mrs. Oliphant

"THEOSOPHIST" EDITORIAL NOTES

V: Matter and Force

IN our age of freedom of thought and cheap paradox—party spirit reigns supreme, and science has become more intolerant, if possible, than even theology. The only position, therefore, that could be safely assumed by a student of esoteric philosophy against (evidently) a champion of the *exact* science, in a discussion upon the appropriateness of certain modern scientific terms, would be to fight the latter with his own weapons, yet without stirring an inch from one's own ground. And this is just what I now propose to do. * * *

To show the better the right we have to assume an attitude of opposition against certain arbitrary assumptions of modern science, and to hold to our own views, I must be permitted to make a short digression and to remind our critic of a few unanswerable points. The bare fact that modern science has been pleased to divide and subdivide the atmosphere into a whole host of elements, and to call them so for her own convenience, is no authoritative reason why the Occultists should accept that terminology. Science has never yet succeeded in decomposing a single one of the many simple bodies, miscalled "elementary substances," for which failure, probably, the latter have been named by her "elementary." And whether she may yet, or never may, succeed in that direction in time, and thus recognize her error, in the meanwhile we, Occultists, permit ourselves to maintain that the alleged "primordial" atoms would be better specified under any other name but that one. With all the respect due to the men of science, the terms "element" and "elementary" applied to the ultimate atoms and molecules of matter of which they know nothing, do not seem in the least justifiable. It is as though the Royal Society agreed to call every star a "Kosmos," because each star is supposed to be a world like our own planet, and then would begin taunting the ancients with ignorance since

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Note.—This and the next installment of the "Notes" are extracted from "What is Matter and What is Force?" published in *The Theosophist*, September, 1882, and written by H. P. Blavatsky (see *S.D.* I, 560).—Eds. Theosophy.

they knew but of one *Kosmos*—the boundless infinite universe! So far, however, science admits herself that the words "element" and "elementary," unless applied to primordial principles, or self-existing essences out of which the universe was evoluted, are unfortunate terms; and remarks thereupon that "experimental science deals only with legitimate deductions from the facts of observation, and *has nothing to do with any* kind of essences except those which it can *see, smell, or taste.*" Professor J. P. Cooke tells us that "Science leaves all others to the metaphysicians" (*New Chemistry,* 1877).

This stern *pronunciamento,* which shows the men of science refusing to take any thing *on faith,* is immediately followed by a very curious admission made by the same author. "Our theory, I grant, may all be wrong," he adds, "and there may be no such things as molecules (!) . . . The new chemistry *assumes, as its fundamental postulate, that the magnitudes we call molecules are realities; but this is only a postulate.*" We are thus made to suspect that the exact science of chemistry, as well as *transcendental* metaphysics, needs to take something on blind faith. Grant her the postulate—and her deductions make of her an *exact* science; deny it—and the "exact science" falls to pieces! Thus, in this respect, physical science does not stand higher than psychological science, and the Occultists need fear but very little of the thunderbolts of their most *exact* rivals. Both are, to say the least, on a par. The chemist, though carrying his sub-division of molecules further than the physicist, can no more than he experiment on individual molecules. One may even remind both that none of them has ever seen *an individual* molecule. Nevertheless, and while priding themselves upon taking nothing on faith, they admit that they cannot often follow the sub-division of molecules with the eye, but "can discern it with the intellect." What more, then, do they do than the Occultists, the alchemists, the adepts? While they discern with the "intellect," the adept, as he maintains, can as easily discern the sub-divisibility *ad infinitum* of that, which his rival of the *exact* methods pleases to call an "*elementary* body," and he follows it—with the *spiritual* in addition to his *physical* intellect. * * *

Science does not call electricity a *force,* but only one of the many manifestations of the same; a mode of action or motion. Her list of the various kinds of energy which occur in nature, is long, and

many are the names she uses to distinguish them. With all that, one of her most eminent adepts, Professor Balfour Stewart, warns his readers (see *The Forces and Energies of Nature*) that their enumeration has nothing *absolute,* or complete about it, "representing as it does, not so much the present state of our knowledge as *of our want of knowledge, or rather profound ignorance of the ultimate constitution of matter.*" So great is that ignorance, indeed, that treating upon heat, a mode of motion far less mysterious and better understood than electricity, that scientist confesses that "if heat be not a species of motion, it must necessarily be a species of matter," and adds that the men of science "have *preferred* to consider heat as a species of motion to the alternative of supposing the creation *of a peculiar kind of matter.*"

And if so, what is there to warrant us that science will not yet find out her mistake some day, and recognize and call electricity in agreement with the Occultists—"a species of a peculiar kind of matter"?

Thus, before the too dogmatic admirers of modern science take the Occultists to task for viewing electricity under one of its aspects —and for maintaining that its basic principle is—MATTER, they ought at first to demonstrate that science errs when she herself, through the mouth-piece of her recognized high-priests, confesses her ignorance as to what is properly Force and what is Matter. For instance, the same Professor of Natural Philosophy, Mr. Balfour Stewart, LL.D., F.R.S., in his lectures on "The Conservation of Energy," tells us as follows:—

"We know nothing, or next to nothing, of the ultimate structure and properties of matter, whether organic or inorganic," and ..... "it is in truth only a convenient classification and nothing more."

Furthermore, one and all, the men of science admit that, though they possess a definite knowledge of the general laws, yet they "have *no* knowledge of individuals in the domains of physical science." For example, they *suspect* "a large number of our diseases to be caused by organic germs," but they have to avow that their "ignorance about these germs is most complete." And in the chapter, "What is Energy," the same great Naturalist staggers the too confiding profane by the following admission:—

If our knowledge of the nature and habits of organized molecules be so small, our knowledge of the ultimate molecules of inorganic matter is, if possible, still smaller . . . . . It thus appears, that we know little or nothing about the shape or size of molecules, or about the forces which actuate them . . . . . the very largest masses of the universe sharing with the very smallest this property of being beyond the scrutiny of the human senses.

Of physical, "human senses" he must mean, since he knows little, if anything, of any other senses. But let us take note of some further admissions; this time by Professor Le Conte in his lecture on the *Correlation of Vital with Chemical and Physical Forces:*—

. . . . . *"The distinction between force and energy is very imperfectly, or not at all, defined in the higher forms of force, and especially in the domain of life . . . . . our language cannot be more precise until our ideas in this department are far clearer than now."*

Even as regards the familiar liquid—water—science is at a loss to decide whether the oxygen and hydrogen exist, as such, in water, or whether they are produced by some unknown and unconceived transformation of its substances. "It is a question," says Mr. J. P. Cooke, Professor of Chemistry, "about which we may speculate, but in regard to which we have no knowledge. Between the qualities of water and the qualities of these gases there is not the most distant resemblance." All they know is that water can be decomposed by an electrical current; but why it is so decomposed, and then again recombined, or what is the nature of that they call electricity, &c., they do not know. Hydrogen, moreover, was till very lately one of the very few substances which was known only in its aeriform condition. It is the lightest form of matter known.* For nearly sixty years, ever since the days when Davy liquified chlorine, and Thilorier carbonic acid under a pressure of fifty atmospheres—five gases had always resisted manipulation—hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, carbonic oxide, and finally bioxide of nitrogen. Theoretically they might be reduced but no means could be found by which they could be dealt with practically, although Berthelot had subjected them to a pressure of 800 atmospheres. There, however—where Faraday and Dumas, Regnault and Berthelot had failed—M. Cail-

*A cubic yard of air at the temperature of 77 deg. Fahr. weighs about two pounds, while a cubic yard of hydrogen weighs only 2½ ounces.

letet, a comparatively unknown student of science, but a few years ago achieved a complete success. On the 16th of December, 1878, he liquified oxygen in the laboratory of the "Ecole Normale," and on the 30th of the same month he succeeded in reducing even the refractory hydrogen. M. Raoul Pictet, of Geneva, went still further. Oxygen and hydrogen were not only liquified, but *solidified,* as the experiment—by illuminating with electric light the jet as it passed from the tubes containing the two gases, and finding therein incontestable signs of polarization that implies the suspension of solid particles in the gas—proved it.**

There is not an atom in nature, but contains latent or potential electricity which manifests under known conditions. Science knows that matter generates what it calls force, the latter manifesting itself under various forms of energy—such as heat, light, electricity, magnetism, gravitation, &c.,—yet that same science has hitherto been unable as we find from her own admissions, as given above, to determine with any certainty where matter ends and force (or spirit, as some call it) begins. Science, while rejecting metaphysics, and relegating it through her mouth-piece, Professor Tyndall, to the domain of poetry and fiction, unbridles as often as any metaphysician her wild fancy, and allows mere hypotheses to run race on the field of unproved speculation. All this she does, as in the case of the molecular theory, with no better authority for it, than the paradoxical necessity for the philosophy of every science to arbitrarily select and assume imaginary fundamental principles; the only proof offered in the way of demonstrating the actual existence of the latter, being a certain harmony of these principles with observed facts. Thus, when men of science imagine themselves sub-dividing a grain of sand to the ultimate molecule they call oxide of silicon, they have no *real* but only an *imaginary* and purely hypothetical right to suppose that, if they went on dividing it further (which, of course, they cannot), the molecule, separating itself into its chemical constituents of silicon and oxygen, would finally yield that which *has* to be regarded as two *elementary bodies*—since the authorities so regard them! Neither an atom of silicon, nor an atom of oxygen, is capable of any further sub-division, into something else—they say. But the

**Article of Mr. Henry de Parville, one of the best of the French popularizers of science, in *Journal des Débats.*

only good reason we can find for such a strange belief is, because they have tried the experiment and—failed.

How can they tell that a new discovery, some new invention of still finer and more perfect apparatuses and instruments may not show their error some day? How do they know that those very bodies now called "elementary atoms" are not in their turn compound bodies or molecules, which, when analyzed with still greater minuteness, may show, containing in themselves, the *real,* primordial, elementary globules, the *gross* encasement of the still finer atom-spark —spark of LIFE, the source of Electricity—MATTER still! Truly has Henry Kunrath, the greatest of the alchemists and Rosicrucians of the Middle Ages, shown spirit in man as in every atom—as a bright flame enclosed within a more or less transparent globule—which he calls *soul.* And since the men of science confessedly know nothing of *(a)* the origin of either matter or force; *(b)* nor of electricity or life; and *(c)* that their knowledge of the ultimate molecules of inorganic matter amounts to a cipher; why, I ask, should any student of Occultism, whose great masters *may* know, perchance, of essences which the professors of modern materialistic school can neither "see, smell nor taste,"—why should he be expected to take their definitions as to what is MATTER and what FORCE as the last word of unerring, infallible science?

Study the books published upon the newly re-organized chemistry based upon what is known as "Avogadro's Law"; and then one will learn that the term *imponderable* agents is now regarded as a scientific absurdity. The latest conclusions at which modern chemistry has arrived, it seems, have brought it to reject the word *imponderable,* and to make away with those text-books of *pre*-modern science, which refer the phenomena of heat and electricity to *attenuated forms of matter.* Nothing, they hold, can be added to, or subtracted from bodies without altering their weight. This was said and written in 1876, by one of the greatest chemists in America. With all that, have they become any the wiser for it? Have they been able to replace by a more scientific theory the old and tabooed "phlogiston theory" of the science of Stahl, Priestley, Scheele and others?—or, because they have proved, to their own satisfaction, that it is highly unscientific to refer the phenomena of heat and electricity to attenuated forms of matter, have they succeeded at the

same time in proving what are really, Force, Matter, Energy, Fire, Electricity—LIFE? The *phlogiston* of Stahl—a theory of combustion taught by Aristotle and the Greek philosophers—as elaborated by Scheele, the poor Swedish apothecary, a secret student of Occultism, who, as Professor Cooke says of him, "added more knowledge to the stock of chemical science in a single year than did Lavoisier in his life-time"—was not a mere fanciful speculation, though Lavoisier was permitted to taboo and upset it. But, indeed, were the high priests of modern science to attach more weight to the *essence* of things, than to mere generalizations, then, perhaps, would they be in a better position to tell the world more of the "ultimate structure of matter" than they now are.

Lavoisier, as it is well known, did not add any new fact of prime importance by upsetting the phlogiston theory, but only added "a grand generalization." But the Occultists prefer to hold to the fundamental theories of ancient sciences. No more than the authors of the *old* theory do they attach to phlogiston—which has its specific name as one of the attributes of *Akasa*—the idea of weight which the uninitiated generally associate with all matter. And though to us it is a *principle,* a well-defined essence, whereas to Stahl and others it was an *undefined* essence—yet, no more than we, did they view it as *matter* in the sense it has for the present men of science. As one of their modern professors puts it: "Translate the *phlogiston by energy,* and in Stahl's work on Chemistry and Physics, of 1731, put *energy* where he wrote *phlogiston,* and you have ..... our great modern doctrine of conservation of energy." Verily so; it is the "great modern doctrine," only—*plus* something else, let me add. Hardly a year after these words had been pronounced, the discovery by Professor Crookes of *radiant matter*—of which, further on—has nigh upset again all their previous theories.

If scientists say that "force is incapable of destruction, except by the same power which created it," then they tacitly admit the existence of such a *power,* and have therefore *no right* to throw obstacles in the way of those who, bolder than themselves, try to penetrate *beyond,* and find that they can only do so by *lifting the Veil of Isis.*

—*Isis Unveiled*

THE CORRELATION OF FORCES

THE existence of a law called the Correlation of Forces is well known to modern physicists. Through application of this law on the material plane all the marvels of Science are achieved. Nature herself employs the principle of correlation in the production of minerals, herbs, plants and trees. By combining and re-combining the natural forces and elements, the species in all kingdoms are formed. But the universality of this law, the vast scope of its operation, has not yet been suspected. Modern materialistic science is admittedly empiric, and has hardly scratched the surface of the laws it is engaged in studying. In one of his articles dealing with *occult* Science, Wm. Q. Judge says:

> The Masters of Occultism state that a law of "transmutation among forces" prevails forever. Modern science admits the existence of this law as the correlation of forces. It is felt in the moral sphere of our being as well as in the physical world, and causes remarkable changes in a man's character and circumstances quite beyond us at present and altogether unknown to science and metaphysics.

Correlation of forces on the material plane implies the chemical and atomic mixture of the various elements known to science. But what is the nature of the law as applied to the moral sphere? What is the mode of its operation, and what the materials used? To answer these questions requires a revival of belief in the presently-unpopular theories of the ancient alchemists. For man, they held, is a complex chemical and meta-chemical laboratory—the living human workshop of occult nature. In man meet and mingle all the forces of the universe, and just as physical nature serves as a laboratory for the relating and combining of material elements, so the human workshop is the alchemical laboratory for the correlation and transmutation of moral forces.

Everyone knows that by uniting hydrogen and oxygen in correct proportions, water is produced—an element entirely different from either of the constituents. By combining uranium with certain other chemicals the atomic bomb became possible. It would be utterly impossible in the space of a few pages to enumerate the achieve-

ments of science resulting from the physical correlation of forces on the material plane. But where is the scientist or group of scientists who have concerned themselves with the far more practical work of moral correlation? What investigator is able to measure the force of hate, or calculate the results of a suspicious thought injected into the heart of an otherwise pure man? Where is to be found the researcher who devotes his life to seeking out the constituents of a kindly character, or tracing down the results of a flash of revenge? The so-far discovered elements in physical nature number about one hundred, but nowhere in Western schools do we find an attempt to enumerate moral and spiritual potentials.

H. P. Blavatsky and Wm. Q. Judge spared no effort to convince students of Theosophy that the powers and forces of the inner man are subject to accurate scientific law—yet how many there are who cherish the delusion that spiritual knowledge can be gained without effort, without the infinitely laborious process of moral and spiritual correlation! In the laboratory of occult nature, all inner constituents must be combined in proper ethical proportions—else no success is possible. Every fleeting thought must be measured, every flicker of desire calculated as to its significance in the alchemy of soul. To hope to gain spiritual knowledge without necessary compounds of virtue is as un-scientific as to expect to produce water without oxygen, or to release atomic energy without the necessary fissures of uranium or some other similar element.

The whole history of the Theosophical Movement of this age is a study in the law of the correlation of moral forces. And he who would know the dynamic, though invisible, power of love and hate, trust and suspicion, greed and ambition, has but to behold the fates of some of the characters who entered precipitantly into the realm of the occult sciences. The process of discipleship has always been one of metaphysical alchemy, the compounding of virtue and the dissolving of vice. How many students there have been who, after months and years of effort toward self-purification, still combine pride and selfishness with good works in their search for knowledge!

H. P. Blavatsky gives the account of several aspirants whose lives were ruined by infiltration into their natures of psychic and moral impurity. One man went mad, another committed suicide, while a third suddenly died—each the victim of emotional instability in

the face of moral choice. In an article called *Culture of Concentration,* Wm. Q. Judge depicts in striking details the force of moral and immoral powers in their effects upon the inner man. The common sentiment of vanity, he says, which we think to be so harmless, is of so potent a nature that, when mixed with other inner forces, it produces in the realm of the astral body—the focus for inner etheric energies—an effect similar to that which follows a terrific explosion. Fear acts to shrivel up the astral body, much along the lines of freezing, while envy beclouds the inner nature as though it were an inky substance poured into pure colorless water. Physicians have established that certain glands pour a poisonous lymph into the blood stream simultaneously with the engendering of the sensation of anger or hatred. There are moral, psychic and physical reasons why, on the long and weary road to self-knowledge, every single emotion must be mastered.

The law of the correlation of forces, like all natural laws, can be used in two directions. It can be used to build, to purify, to perfect, or it can be used to destroy. Indeed, every living mortal is using it in one way or the other all the time. It is by the mixture and admixture of psychic and moral forces that every man daily molds his character. Who can say what might be the effect in a person's inner life of correlating one additional virtue with those already possessed? Who can guess what ingredients lie dormant within the alchemical laboratory of his own nature, awaiting but the fusion of some missing element? Just as the true physician restores health by finding the one remedy needed to supply a deficiency in the body, so, in similar manner, it might be that the eradication of one single vice, or the acquirement of a single virtue is all that is needed to bring undreamed-of enlightenment. Says a Master of Wisdom: "THERE ARE THE POWERS OF ALL NATURE BEFORE YOU; TAKE WHAT YOU CAN."

Starting therefore with Universal Brotherhood or Altruism as the basic moral element of Nature, let us test all virtue, compound all ethics, and neglect no possible correlation in our search for ways and means to serve the race.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—

KRISHNA *says that he "incarnates from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked and the establishment of righteousness." How could there be evolution if evil were destroyed? Isn't contrast necessary?*

Evil, as one of a pair of opposites, cannot be eliminated until all duality disappears with the end of manifestation. But evil actions, wickedness in man's nature, can be put "out of existence"—and this, far from hindering evolution, is the course of moral progress. To conquer a thing means to make it powerless to act against its victor's will. The purpose of every great teacher is that of Krishna—creation, preservation, and destruction in order to have regeneration. Can we not take Mr. Judge's lead, given in the opening pages of his Notes on the *Gita,* and regard Krishna as the Higher Self in each one of us? Every man shares the mission of Krishna—a mission he has largely forgotten, but which he is nevertheless constantly incarnating to pursue. Indeed, Mr. Judge explains the purpose of every man's life almost in Krishna's very words when he says, "We come back to earth . . . to continue the struggle toward perfection, toward the development of the faculties we have and the destruction of the wickedness in us."

The wickedness in ourselves is the only wickedness we can "destroy" and regenerate, and the nature of that destruction is indicated by W.Q.J.'s phrase, "throwing Kama into its own sphere." Like weeds which are only flowers out of place and out of control, "wickedness" is the tendency to spend energy in the wrong direction. There is no need—nor possibility—of destroying the energy; it must be re-directed. The "destruction" of the physical body brings with it no knowledge. It is *understanding*—the perfection through transmutation—which accomplishes the aim of the spiritual man.

Am I wrong in thinking that examinations are a menace to education?

If we say that examinations are a "menace," we condemn alike the good and the bad types. A constructive view would be to diagnose the different kinds of examinations. Theosophically con-

sidered, can we not say that self-examination, "self-induced and self-devised," is an essential of all progress and of true education? That would seem to be the prototype of all lesser examinations, which become progressive externalizations of self-conscious and self-*critical* thought.

At the bottom of the list must come those examinations which are nothing more than competitive exercises in the faculty of memorizing, and for which the most fitting preparation is the well-known process of "cramming." Somewhere between these two lies the examination which is graded, not from the absolute basis of achievement, but from the valid relativity of effort. What better basis is there for examinations—if we must have them—than that given in the words, "He who does all that he can, and the best that he can, does enough for us"? Examinations should be the source of growing self-confidence, not of strain and confusion. For education to be effective, there must be present in the student "an unlimited confidence in his own ability to learn, and in the teacher's ability to teach."

How can you explain that it is foolish to fear death? People don't believe in being "heroic," these days.

It cannot be explained if somewhere in the back of our minds lurks the idea that, all things considered, it is rather heroic not to fear death. Actually, "fearful" and "fearless" aren't the right words to describe men's attitudes toward death. Many men who fear death greatly will lay down their lives in some act of heroism. Defiance of their fear—not simply absence of it—is what makes them heroes.

Normally all men fear death if they do not have some concept of immortality; and no man will fear death if he has a realizing sense of the continuity of soul. There are, basically, only two attitudes toward death, and they spring from ignorance, or knowledge, of the existence of soul. There is nothing "foolish"—and everything logical—about a man's fearing death if he believes he has only one life to live and lose. Conversely, there is nothing heroic in a man's not fearing death if he knows that *he* doesn't die. The doctrines of Theosophy lay a philosophical basis for fearlessness, both physical and moral. The only death to be "feared"—guarded against—is the death of ideals or of integrity.

What about discipline? Some people seem to think of it as an end in itself, instead of being only the means to a given end.

Discipline is almost invariably associated nowadays with the idea of punishment, but this "discipline" is administered by someone else, while in its true sense discipline means the things we do in order to be able to learn. It is a process of *self-determined control*—but is, then, control an end in itself, or only a preface to achievement?

H.P.B. called it a "mistaken idea" that an adept is a man who goes through a course of training, consisting of minute attention to a set of arbitrary rules, acquiring first one power and then another. "Adepts," she says, "are generally classed by the number of 'principles' they have under their perfect control." In our terms, this means that progress does not consist in the possessions or experiences we accumulate, but in the *values* we abstract from them. The fact that nothing worthwhile is achieved without difficulty may expand itself to a perception that the surmounting of difficulties is itself the essence of all achievement.

It is clear, then, that a discipline which is only a "set of arbitrary rules," and a self-control which is maintained simply to acquire a certain "power" are equally inadequate. Self-discipline can be motivated by pride and self-righteousness. At the same time, if we practice self-control in order to attain a personal end, the benefits of that self-control are largely lost when the end is attained, and then we must start off once more. Mr. Crosbie indicated that control of specific things should follow after the attitude and resolution of General Control—real self-discipline—was taken.

To set ourselves to conquer *only* specifics is, actually, an unsatisfying procedure, because in the nature of things we are constantly outgrowing all relative goals. The achievement we can never pass beyond is an always expanding knowledge and power, and both of these are functions of *control.* Krishna demands one-pointedness. This he calls the "Divine Discipline," which is "wisdom itself, the object of wisdom, and that which is to be obtained by wisdom."

MIND OF THE AGE

II: Attitudes on "Morality"

IF there is a reality of moral evolution, the only significant motions of the soul in any age are efforts to achieve a higher life. There must be nourishment for its aspirations, and, if sufficient sustenance is not found among conventional presentations of morality, the soul must either stop moving or experiment with new views. This latter, perhaps, is precisely what has been happening during the last three-quarters of a century in the realm of personal morality. Since orthodox religions were not revolutionized with new inspiration during this important transition period, they shortly came to be of no use at all. In Theosophical terms, the evolutionary intensification of mental and psychic powers demanded something more than religious ritual and superstition, and any religion which failed to provide a rational basis for morality was doomed to die.

The Theosophical Movement evidently includes cycles of both reform and revolution. The periods of reform are marked by the efforts of those agents who provide the means for an expanding of the moral energies already linked to accepted religious beliefs. An Eastern tradition suggests that the Buddha was a revolutionary as Gautama, but a reformer as Sankaracharya. Perhaps the greatest theosophists distinguish themselves by knowing when to favor reform and when to recognize the occasional necessity for thoroughgoing revolution. "Revolution," it seems, does become necessary when the mass of people show a readiness to desert the old creeds, for this is indication that no longer does any breath of moral inspiration animate the words of their codes and symbolisms.

The legends of Christianity were universally known, for instance, during the nineteenth century. The publication of *Isis Unveiled* called attention to the identity in tradition at many points between the Christian story and the story of the great religions in other lands. Those who knew and instinctively respected something in the description of the Holy Trinity, of Jesus on the Mount, and of the Virgin birth of the Saviour, were given opportunity to utilize the comparative religious studies of Mme. Blavatsky, and to approach

"theosophy" by reflection upon them. Yet today, how many have one-tenth of the nineteenth-century familiarity with these Christian teachings? And when the mind of the age once *deserts,* there is no return—nor has there ever been. The gradual abandonment of Christianity by the average man left the "brave new world" without any accessible source for faith in moral idealism, save that of a popularly discredited Theosophy itself. The fine men of religion who still ennobled orthodox Christianity were fewer in number. The most inspiring Christians became simply humanitarians: the *doctrines* had died for them, too. The Christian religion was dead, even though the way of life attributed to Jesus might be a spiritual reality in the lives of many men.

There is, in a strict sense, no such thing as "social" morality. All morality is personal. The word "moral" implies an individual or personal grasp of principle and the individual or personal effort to apply it. Social conventions, whether they relate to standards of business or marriage or to international rules of warfare, have nothing essentially to do with morality, but provide the mental and emotional environment in which a man's choices must be made. Notions characteristic of our time, concerning the nature of man, tend towards the obscuration of this fact—morality being conceived as a necessary compromise between conflicting pressures in family or social life. Morality is currently thought of in terms of laws and accepted customs, but this presents us with a serious psychological difficulty, for no one can truly have his heart in a morality he is trying to practice on such a basis. To believe that certain restrictions and conventions are a good sort of compromise for the majority does not mean that the individual so believing will always desire to follow them, nor that he will expect to. Any compromise-morality inevitably sets up a persistent dissatisfaction in the mind—"Could *I* get more out of this arrangement if I were clever?" Deviations from a morality considered to be simply a "norm" of behavior are regarded only from the standpoint of expedience or inexpedience. There is no clearly recommendable line of motivation which the modern man may strive to reach.

This is an old question indeed. The central theme of Plato's *Republic* is the difference between the way of thinking represented by Socrates and that of Thrasymachus, the latter arguing that if

society *thinks* one to be virtuous, that is all that is necessary. Men in general have adopted the position of Thrasymachus, because the emphasis of theological Christianity was upon the external strictures of morality rather than upon morality itself and because it is very hard to unlearn this attitude of mind.

In political terms, the vogue of "scientific materialism" which followed the death of traditional religion was simply the doctrine of the mass man. It was the belief that men could only help themselves and the world they lived in by social planning—this faith in "a new world now" was not an outgrowth of the viewpoint which inspired the founders of the American Republic, for there was a subtle and damaging essential difference. Washington, Jefferson and Paine believed in the reality of soul and spirit. The twentieth century does not. Therefore, while the social planning of the Founding Fathers expected and encouraged the best from man, today's plans show that only the worst is really expected. Twentieth-century "planning" has principally been devoted to finding ways of protecting ourselves from each other, for we believe that since we are all driven primarily by brute instincts, the smart thing is to know the laws of the jungle better than other people do. This is a root attitude in respect to morality. It encourages men to fight each other, whether via class struggle, competitive business, or in international war, and is also a subtle influence in relations between men and women, though here the majority of serious conflicts are psychological.

It is, in fact, in those areas of experience symbolized by the word "marriage" that the assimilated philosophy of any age, whether good or bad, has its greatest force of impact in determination of the course of human lives. Within those relationships which involve both emotional interaction and the issue of children, man faces his widest range of problems, and as he comes to think and act in what appears to be only a "personal" situation, so will he in time come to think and act in respect to education, economics, politics and religion. Here man must come to some sort of terms with his own animal energies; here he must meet another human being faced with the same problem, and here both of them must move toward the establishment of some sort of practical philosophy which clarifies distinctions between vagrant desires and the needs of the soul.

The field of inter-relationships between men and women is known to be important by all save the few who seek to escape difficult problems by denying that any significant issues are focussed on the psychic plane. But its importance is interpreted almost entirely in materialistic, rather than in philosophical, terms. From the theosophical point of view, it is therefore a problem falsely stated, and not open to constructive discussion in its prevailing context. To talk about "sex problems" as such is to imply that matters of psychic maladjustment may be corrected on the physical plane, which is to admit a fallacious premise. There are problems in plenty, perhaps the most difficult of our age, which *involve* physical inter-relationships, but their root and origin is in every case mental and moral rather than physical.

Following the impact of the "Darwinian school," with its concept of man as a slightly refined animal, Sigmund Freud pioneered a series of investigations in forms of sex motivation, and the hypotheses he evolved to interpret his observations were regarded as a new and complete revelation. A "science of sex" arose—in reality, another cult—and the majority of people came to consider "sex" the central engrossing problem which, though specialized, has much to do with all human behavior. Books on the subject, involving every conceivable phase of physical and emotional relationship, are always best sellers, and, almost without exception, the modern novel is orientated around the fascination of eroticism. The whole pre-occupation with a single phase of human experience stems from the impact of the animalistic interpretation of all human behavior. Men are simply seeking escape from a world made drab by lack of creative moral inspiration—in other words, a world bereft of philosophy.

The overt nature of present pre-occupation with "sex" is an undeniable feature of the mind of the age. In order to understand this trend, it is necessary to realize that for many centuries every feeling and impulse of the physical man was supposed to be evil. Today, by an inevitable swing of the pendulum, each physical impulse is welcomed as a possible road to happiness. Neither extreme, however, can reveal truth. In Theosophical terms, the realm of the senses can neither be good nor evil in itself, for "good" and "evil" pertain to the *way* man lives in the sensory world. Those who are

psychologically bound to physical sensations by lack of understanding are in nearly the same case as were their sin-ridden forbears, though the pre-occupation is now positive instead of negative.

A man's actual "behavior" is never as dangerous, whatever it may be, as is the lack of faith in one's own moral strength and significance. Until men have adequate encouragement to seek out a "higher life," their actions may properly be regarded as more confused than evil—and much of the confusion may be traced to various religious pronouncements against any possibility of a life consecrated to a natural harmony between body and soul.

"Error of Eccentricity"

The fundamental truths are all men's property. Whether or not we live by them, we all know them, with a deep instinctiveness. In the realm of human conduct, particularly, I do not suppose it is possible for any man, however acute or profound his mental processes may be, to say anything bearing the stamp of universal truth that many other men, in equivalent words, have not said before him. . . . The desperate effort to be original has led many a young writer into stony pastures. . . . T. S. Eliot, in one of his percipient moments, pointed out that it is not in his personal emotions, the emotions provoked by particular events in his life, that the poet is in any way remarkable or interesting. How could he be, when these are the common property of mankind, evoked by the same stimuli through untold generations of men? One error, he remarked, "of eccentricity in poetry is to seek for new human emotions to express; and in this search for novelty in the wrong place it discovers the perverse. The business of the poet is not to find new emotions, but to use the ordinary ones and, in working them into poetry, to express feelings which are not in actual emotions at all."

The fear of saying what has been said before is one of the least formidable fears that any writer has to face. There always comes a time when something needs to be said again. —J. Donald Adams

OF THE SEARCH OF PERFECTION

by GEBER

SEEING this Science treats of the Imperfect Bodies of Minerals, and teacheth how to perfect them; we in the first place consider two Things, viz. Imperfection and Perfection. * * * We compose this Book of Things perfecting and corrupting (according as we have found by experience) because Contraries set near each other, are the more manifest. * * *

The Thing which perfects in Minerals, is the substance of Argentvive[1] and Sulphur proportionably commixt, by long and temperate decoction [boiling or condensation] in the Bowels of clean inspissate [thickened], and fixed Earth (with conservation of its Radical Humidity not corrupting) and brought to a solid fusible Substance,[2] with due Ignition, and rendered Malleable. By the Definition of this Nature perfecting, we may more easily come to the Knowledge of the Thing corrupting. And this is that which is understood in a contrary Sense, viz. the pure substance of Sulphur and Argentvive, without due Proportion commixed, or not sufficiently decocted in the Bowels of unclean, not rightly inspissate nor fixed Earth, having

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NOTE.—The full title of this work is "Of the Investigation or Search of Perfection," and these extracts are taken from *The Works of Geber,* The Most Experienced Arabian Prince and Philosopher, Englished by Richard Russell, 1678. (E. J. Holmyard's edition, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York: 1928. Italics—used over-liberally in the original, evidently to emphasize alchemical terms—have been omitted.) Russell describes himself as the translator of Raymond Lully's works (selections from which were printed in THEOSOPHY XXXII, 111 and 162), and of the greatest part of the works of Paracelsus. Footnotes have been added to the extracts from Geber, for readers who wish to follow out specific theosophical teachings represented by the alchemical symbolism. Reference will also be made to Franz Hartmann's edition of *Paracelsus* (2nd ed.), because Paracelsus could speak much more plainly in the 16th century than could Geber in the 8th, and also because Hartmann, a student in H. P. Blavatsky's time and a frequent contributor to the theosophical magazines, has correlated the terminology of Paracelsus with that of modern Theosophy.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

[1]An alchemical term for Mercury. (Definitions of other obscure terms will be inserted in brackets in the text itself.) Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury, according to Paracelsus, are the three constituent states or principles of the cosmos, corresponding to Substance, Energy, and Consciousness. Also, Salt represents the contractive quality—*body;* Sulphur the expansive power, which "burns"—the *soul* or light in all things; and Mercury the *Life* or Spirit. (Hartmann's *Paracelsus,* pp. 41 and 231; also pp. 204 and 247.) See *Theosophical Glossary,* "Alchemy." *Isis Unveiled* I, 309, 505; II, 621. *Secret Doctrine* I, 388; II, 113, 542, 28, 462.

[2]On Primordial Substance: *S.D.* I, 330, 584. *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge,* pp. 6, 88, 127. *Gloss.,* "Swabhavat," "Mysterium Magnum," "Ideos," "Chaos," "Nout."

a Combustible and Corrupting Humidity, and being of a rare and porous Substance; or having Fusion without due Ignition, or no Fusion, and not sufficiently Malleable.

The first Definition I find intruded in these two Bodies [metals], viz. in Sol [Gold][3] and Luna [Silver], according to the Perfection of each: but the second in these four, viz. Tin, Lead, Copper and Iron, according to the Imperfection of each. And because these Imperfect Bodies are not reducible to Sanity and Perfection, unless the contrary be operated in them; that is, the Manifest be made Occult and the Occult be made Manifest: which Operation, or Contrariation, is made by Preparation, therefore they must be prepared, Superfluities in them removed, and what is wanting supplied; and so the known Perfection inserted in them. But Perfect Bodies need not this preparation; yet they need such Preparation, as that, by which their Parts may be more Subtiliated [thinned or rarified], and they reduced from their Corporality to a fixed Spirituality. The intention of which is, of them to make a Spiritual fixed Body,[4] that is, much more attenuated and subtiliated than it was before. Of all these Preparations (according to our Investigation) we shall sufficiently treat in their proper Place in this Book. What shall be (as is hereafter mentioned) sufficiently prepared, will be fit to make the White or great Red Elixir with.

Chapter II. Of the Stone[5] of Philosophers, that it is one only, for the White, and for the Red,[6] and from what Things it is extracted. And of the Possibility and Way of Perfection.

We find Modern Artists to describe to us one only Stone, both for the White and for the Red; which we grant to be true: for in every Elixir, that is prepared, White or Red, there is no other Thing than Argentvive and Sulphur, of which, one cannot act, nor be,

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[3]Basic matter of gold: *Isis* I, 50-1, 511. *Gloss.*, "Adamic Earth," "Homogeneity." *S.D.* I, 409.

[4]This is reminiscent of the astral, vital body mentioned in "Culture of Concentration" (THEOSOPHY XXXIV, 326), and in "The Elixir of Life" (see "Contemplation," reprinted in the January THEOSOPHY). *Gloss.*, "Causal Body," "Sudda-Satwa."

[5]*Lapis Philosophorum,* according to Paracelsus, is the spiritual man himself, having attained self-knowledge. (*Paracelsus,* p. 237; also pp. 29, 279.) *S.D.* II, 113. *Isis* I, 309, 213; II, 618. *Gloss.*, "Lapis Philosophorum," "Philosopher's Stone," "Atalanta Fugiens," "Bacon, Roger," "Butler," "Magnum Opus."

[6]On the white and red magnesia or elixir, the "powder of projection": *Isis* I, XXV, 281. *Gloss.*, "Busardier," "Butler." *Paracelsus,* p. 250 fn.

without the other: Therefore it is called, by Philosophers, one Stone, although it is extracted from many Bodies or Things. For it would be a foolish and vain thing to think to extract the same from a Thing, in which it is not, as some infatuated Men have conceited; for it never was the Intention of Philosophers: yet they speak many things by similitude. And because all Metallick Bodies are compounded of Argentvive and Sulphur, pure or impure, by accident, and not innate in their first Nature; therefore, by convenient Preparation, 'tis possible to take away such Impurity. * * *

Chapter IV. Of Preparation and Melioration of Bodies in General.

* * * the way of Preparing and Purifying in General, is this: First, With Fire[7] proportional, the whole Superfluous and Corrupt Humidity in their Essence must be elevated; also their subtil and burning Superfluity removed: and this by Calcination [turning a metal into a fine powder or an ash by combustion]. Afterward, the whole Corrupt Substance of their Superfluous burning Humidity and Blackness remaining in their Calx [ash], must be corroded with those aforesaid Cleansed, Corrosive, Acute, or Harsh Things, until the Calx be White or Red (or coloured according to the Nature and Property of the Body) and clean and pure from all Superfluity or Corruption. These Calxes must be Cleansed with these Corrosives by Grinding, Imbibing and Washing. Afterward, the whole unclean Earthiness, and Combustible and Gross Feculency [impurity] must be taken away, and deposited with the aforesaid Cleansed or Pure Things, not having Metallick Fusion; they being commixed, and well ground together with the aforesaid Calx, depurated [cleansed] in the aforesaid manner. For these, in the Fusion or Reduction of the Calx, will retain with themselves the aforesaid Gross and Unclean Earthiness, the Body remaining pure, Cleansed from all Corrupting Superfluity; and this by Descending [reducing Metallic Calx to metal in which the fused metal flowed *down* into a receiver].

The way of Meliorating and Subtiliating the pure Substance of these, is in General this: First, this Purged and Reduced Body is again Calcined with Fire; and this by the Mundative [cleansing]

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[7]On the "spiritual fire": *Gloss.*, "Athanor." *S.D.* II, 105-110, 113. *Isis* I, 283. *Trans.*, pp. 57, 114-117.

helps aforesaid: and then, with such of these as are Solutive it must be dissolved. For this Water is our Stone, and Argentvive of Argentvive, and Sulphur of Sulphur, abstracted from the Spiritual Body, and Subtiliated or Attenuated; which may be Meliorated by comforting the Elemental Virtues in it, with other prepared Things, that are of the kind of its own Kind; and by augmenting the Colour, Fixion, Weight, Purity, Fusion, and all other Things which appertain to a perfect Elixir.

[*The intervening chapters are devoted to the method of preparing the "imperfect metals," which Geber refers to under the names of planets.*[8] *Then Geber relates the preparation of Perfect Bodies, Sol or Gold and Luna or Silver, which are "reduced to Spirituality," so that Gold is dissolved into "a most clear Water,"*[9] *and becomes "the precious Ferment for the Red Elixir, and the true Body made Spiritual." The "Water of Luna*[10] *dissolved, is the Ferment for the White Elixir, made Spiritual."*—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

Chapter XI. Of the Properties of the Greater Elixir.

We have now sufficiently determinated the Preparation and Subtiliation of perfect Bodies, that every Discreet Operator[11] may be enabled to attain his Intention. Therefore let him attend to the Properties and Ways of Action of the Composition of the Greater Elixir: For we endeavour to make one Substance,[12] yet compounded and composed of many; so permanently fixed, that being put upon the Fire, the Fire cannot injure; and that it may be mixed with Metals in Flux, and flow with them, and enter with that, which in them is of an ingressible Substance, and be permixed with that, which in them is of a permixable Substance; and be consolidated

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[8]On planetary influences and correspondences: *Teacher's Manual*, p. 121. *Friendly Philosopher*, p. 285. *S.D.* I, 229; II, 593, 639 fn. *Gloss.*, "Vayu," "Vaijayanti," "Chandra-vansa," "Tanmatras," "Tattwa." *Para.*, p. 264 fn.: "By 'stars' *(astra)* Paracelsus does not refer to the physical bodies of the planets, but to mental states existing in the Cosmos, and which are represented by the stars." See also pp. 57-9, 175, 208, 240-46.

[9]*Isis* I, 133, 148, 189-91. *Gloss.*, "W," "Water."

[10]On the "Aura of Silver": *Isis* II, 621. On the "Elixir of Hermes": *Gloss.*, "Hermes Trismegistus."

[11]On the difficulty of acquiring practical knowledge: *Gloss.*, "Magic." On the secrecy employed: *Isis* I, 37.

[12]On root Elements and the One Element: *Gloss.*, "Principles." *Trans.*, p. 102. *S.D.* I, 81, 82 fn., 141, 347, 458 fn., 509, 514, 542-3, 623; II, 105, 594 fn. *Theosophist* IV, 38 fn.: "The *Seventh* State of matter—Life." On Bhutadi: *S.D.* I, 372-3, 452; II, 108. *Gloss.*, "Will," "Akasa," "Alkahest," "Anima Mundi." *Para.*, p. 30.

with that, which in them is of a consolidate Substance; and be fixed with that, which in them is of a fixable Substance; and not be burned by those Things which burn not Gold and Silver; and take away Consolidations and Weights with due Ignition.[13]

Yet you must not think all this can be effected by Preparation at once, in a very short Time, as a few Dayes and Hours; but in respect of other Modern Physicians, and also in respect of the Operation of Nature, the Verity of the Work is sooner terminated this way. Whence the Philosopher saith, *It is a Medicine requiring a long space of time.* Wherefore I tell you, you must patiently sustain Labour, because the work will be long; and indeed Festination [haste] is from the Devils part: Therefore let him that hath not *Patience* desist from the *Work,* for credulity will hinder him making overmuch haste. And every Natural Action hath its determinate Measure and Time, in which it is terminated, viz. in a greater or lesser space. For this Work Three Things are necessary, namely, Patience, Length of Time, and Aptness of Instruments; of which we speak to the Artificer, in the *Sum of the Perfection of Our Magistery.* In divers Chapters, wherein he may find them, if he be sufficiently skilled in our Works. In which, by manifest and open Proof we conclude that our Stone is no other than a Fœtent (or fruitful) Spirit and Living Water,[14] which we have named Dry Water, by Natural Proportion cleansed, and united with such Union, that they can never be absent each from other. To which two must also be added a third, for abbreviating the Work; that is a perfect Body attenuated.

* * * Those Things which by our Experience we have operated, seen with our Eyes, and handled with our Hands, We have writ in the *Sum of the Perfection of Our Magistery.* Therefore, let the Sapient Artificer studiously peruse Our Books, collecting Our dispersed Intention, which We have described in divers places, that We might not expose it to Malignant and Ignorant Men; and let him prove his Collection even unto Knowledge, Studying and Experimenting with the *Instance of Ingenious Labour,* till he come to an intire Understanding of the whole. Let the Artificer exercise himself, and find out this now (in great Love) proposed *Way*

[13]This passage may be correlated with the *Bhagavad-Gita,* Chaps. II, VII, X, XI.
[14]On the Elixir of Life: *Isis* I, 503. *S.D.* I, 144 fn., 555. *Para.,* p. 217.

of Investigation, by Our Consideration; and also acquire a plenary Knowledge of the Verity of the perfecting and corrupting Matter and Form. * * * Be Studious in [Our Books] and you will find Our Whole Science, which We have abbreviated out of the Books of the Ancients.

Human Analysis

Analyse a person as elaborately as you like, the fact remains that he is not so much a permanent phenomenon as a succession of states—that is to say, he is a different individual according to the place he is in, the person in whose company he finds himself, the experiences which he has undergone in the course of the preceding hours. . . . [His personality] is, in reality, nothing more than a convenient abstraction [and] . . . scarcely ever comes into play *as such* in any given situation. What we are concerned with in practice are the "sides" of his nature, his tendencies and proclivities as they are drawn out in turn in infinitely varied ways through his participation in conjunctures which are themselves unique. We see here the complete hopelessness of any attempt to regulate the conduct of life by "science" in any effective sense. For we only gain an effective grasp of a situation insofar as we treat it as something which has never occurred before. It is by recognizing the degree to which it combines familiar elements in a novel fashion that we may arrive at an understanding of its significance. What may be described as the spiritualizing of the life of the world resolves itself into an increasingly complete realization by human beings of the way in which life is presenting them all the time with a sequence of absolutely unprecedented combinations of circumstances. The plane of Science is that of uniformity, unvaried repetition, free interchangeability, the indifference of the generalization to the particulars which it subsumes. The plane of spirit, on the contrary, is that of continuous creation, of perennial novelty, of perpetual adaptation to situations which have never arisen before. Hence our instinctive protest against any treatment of a human problem which involves the element of standardization; we know in our hearts that every contact between living beings is a unique event in the history of the cosmos. —Lawrence Hyde

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Mental Indigestion"

This is the summing-up of our educational situation by Dr. R. N. Whitefield of Jackson, Miss., president of the Federation of State Medical Boards. In a speech reported by the New York *Herald Tribune* of Feb. 11, he states that—

> It is my opinion that the processes involved in education are analogous to the problem of supplying nourishment to promote the growth and well-being of the human body. The principal error made in the earlier education is to change the formula too soon before the youthful mind has fully digested the ingredients.

To our minds, what Dr. Whitefield here suggests should be a main point of emphasis in any critique of modern education—the tendency to fill young minds full of un-coordinated facts—which, incidentally, leaves no room for evolving ideas. Before the much-needed and basic reform can be brought about in education, there must present itself an entirely new (to our civilization at least) conviction of the nature of man. Either the child is a soul whose primary need is *moral* education, or he is only a peculiar biped which must be trained for competition with its fellows in the hypocritical conventions of its society. If the present system is not satisfactory, there is, basically, only one other—and that is the system of Plato, and of all theosophists, past and present.

Platonic Education

Theosophists who have studied the *Republic* see that, for Plato, education was the life-time process of completing the incarnation of the soul into its instruments of mind, body and emotions. Development was not a matter of intellect alone, but included the disciplines of concentration, integration and will. Some such concept doubtless inspired Jefferson when he drew up his plans for education in this American Republic. His ideas were never adopted, but neither were they lost. His plans and foundation for education have been represented, corroborated, and enlarged upon by Albert Jay Nock in his *Theory of Education in the United States.* Nock's book is a penetrating analysis of the metaphysical foundations of the present "factory system" of education, and of the relation between political and moral concepts and the management of institutions of learning.

"Leisure Lore"

Readers of Bosanquet's little book, *Education in Plato's Republic*, cannot long remain oblivious of the basic choice confronting educators today. Some of his introductory remarks treating of Greek education are direct answers to the problems raised by Dr. Whitefield. The Greeks apparently took care to avoid the excesses which threaten to nullify our present system, for they kept clear of the "educational indigestion" which the Mississippi doctor deplores. Indeed, the word "school" is derived from their word meaning leisure, the implications of which are made clear by Bosanquet:

> This conception of "leisure" is one of the greatest ideas that the Greeks have left us. It is not that of amusement or holiday-making. It is opposed both to this and to the pressure of bread-winning industry, and indicates, as it were, the space and atmosphere needed for the human plant to throw out its branches and flowers in their proper shapes. "To have leisure for" any occupation, was to devote yourself to it freely, because your mind demanded it; to make it, as it were, your hobby. It does not imply useless work, but it implies work done for the love of it.

This describes a golden age of scholarship—and the system which alone can maintain a valid relation between philosophy and practice. Where, today, may be found young people who can persist in keeping this spirit of enthusiasm and independent research alive in the midst of the deadening techniques of mass education?

Half-Taught "Specialists"

Dr. Whitefield takes a further step toward Plato's system when he advocates a break in continuous schooling from the first grade through medical school and hospital study or from the first grade to a Ph. D. degree, saying: "It is my firm belief that an individual who spends nearly twenty-five years continuously in school is not altogether practical and may find himself out of harmony with the practical world in which he must live. . . ." This is a gentle statement of a very real problem, whether we consider it in terms of the Sunday-religious and week-day-scientific man, or of the moral orator and immoral actor—for moral as well as psychic schizophrenics are clearly derived products of an education without integration. Dr. Whitefield goes on to say:

> Our prospective physicians (included among today's school pupils) are not being thoroughly taught in the elements of education; they are being hurried along a curriculum which is too heavy and too far advanced for grammar and high school courses. Some subjects in high school should be taught in college.

And, we might add, with Plato, some subjects taught in colleges should be reserved for a maturer age when experience has sharpened perception and broadened perspective. Dr. Whitefield is convinced that "no individual should receive a Ph. D. degree unless he has first spent five or ten years in some useful occupation; and that the medical profession, as well as the public, would be vastly benefited if no medical graduate would be permitted to become a specialist until he has spent from five to ten years in the general practice of medicine."

Accomplished Simplicity

Plato, too, advocated a similar integration between "reality" and scholarly "retreat," for in his view the advanced studies in philosophy and higher mathematics were to be taken up by those fitted after a lifetime spent in the study and application of *basic* ideas—concepts which over the years had been gradually deepened and widened. It is still a wonder to historian-educators that the almost ridiculously simple curriculum of study among the Greeks managed to produce such philosophically able minds as it did, while any college student of today could doubtless snow under the most profound thinker of that time as far as facts and superficial intellectual facility go. But it must be admitted that facts do not produce convictions, and a man without convictions is a man without education—a man incapable of coping with the world or with himself.

The Isolated Fact

The charge that the mental fare served up to children is too heavy can be met by the reminder that, while information surfeits and can soon overburden the mind, knowledge can never do so; and knowledge, Bosanquet remarked, "ceases to be knowledge when it loses unity and relevance." More than any other factor, the departmentalizing of knowledge in our educational institutions contributes to the inability of students to grasp, assimilate and apply it. Gifted, perhaps, with the most superb equipment for gathering facts and

overcoming nature's reticence concerning her processes, we are paradoxically a civilization greatly under-supplied with the insight needed to transform our information into a working and vital knowledge.

Yclept "Education"

H. P. Blavatsky's words on Truth and truths—philosophical, religious, and scientific—have a direct and basic application to education. In her article, "The Babel of Modern Thought" (Theosophy xxix, 558), she writes:

> New systems, yclept philosophical, new sects and societies, spring up now-a-days in every corner of our civilized lands. But even the highest among them agree on no one point, though each claims supremacy. This, because no science, no philosophy—being at best, but a fragment broken from the Wisdom Religion—can stand alone, or be complete in itself. Truth, to be complete, must represent an unbroken continuity. It must have no gaps, no missing links. And which of our modern religions, sciences or philosophies, is free from such defects? Truth is One. Even as the palest reflection of the Absolute, it can be no more dual than is absoluteness itself, nor can it have *two* aspects. But such truth is not for the majorities, in our world of illusion—especially for those minds which are devoid of the *noëtic* element. These have to substitute for the high spiritual and *quasi* absolute truth the relative one, which having two sides or aspects, both conditioned by appearances, leads our "brain-minds"—one to intellectual scientific materialism, the other to materialistic or anthropomorphic religiosity.

What can be done with minds educated in a system of "unbroken continuity," H.P.B. graphically indicated in the section on education in her *Key to Theosophy*. Given the three self-evident, axiomatic Fundamentals of Theosophy, and encouraged to think out and apply instead of memorizing their endless ramifications, what child would fail to achieve in some degree that assimilation and unification of ideas which we call knowledge?

Western Orientalists

H. P. Blavatsky pointed out in 1888 that towards the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century a distinct class of literature appeared. It was based on the researches of Sanskritists and Orientalists, and was considered, therefore, to be scientific. "Hindu,

Egyptian, and other ancient religions, myths and emblems, were made to yield anything the symbologist wanted them to yield," and libraries were flooded "with dissertations rather on phallic and sexual worship than on real symbology" (*S.D.*, I, xxi-xxii). Uncritical acceptance of many of the findings of these scholars led to absurd contradictions. Instances were the favorite theories of Professors Max Müller and Weber, who thought that writing was not known in India even in the days of Panini ("Ignorant of the epoch at which he lived, the Orientalists place his date between 600 B.C. and 300 A.D."—*Theos. Gloss.*), and that the Hindus had all their arts and sciences from the Macedonian Greeks. To disconcert these experts, Professor A. H. Sayce proved, in his *Hibbert Lectures* of 1887 (on the general subject of the ancient Babylonians) that there was intercourse at a very early period between Chaldea and the Sinaitic peninsula, as well as with India. Col. Vans Kennedy proved also that Chaldea owed its civilization to the Hindus (*S.D.*, II, 227-8). Further, in the one example of the antiquity of the Zodiac, M. Bailly (a famous French astronomer of the eighteenth century and member of the Academy) is quoted by H. P. Blavatsky as saying, in his *Astronomie Antique,* that the Hindu systems of astronomy are by far the oldest, and that from them the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and even the Jews, derived their knowledge.

Knowledge of Eastern Civilizations

The past and present position of Sanskrit scholars and Orientalists generally becomes of more than academic interest in the relations now existing between Western nations and the Middle and Far East. By peaceful change, the continent of India attained political independence in 1947, and, in the words of Mr. Vellodi, at a London celebration of the event, "as in the time of Asoka, India proposed to function, as far as she could, as a peace-maker and peace-bringer." She has a hard road to travel to this end. But parallel with these changes in political structure, there is imperative need for continuance of the work of H. P. Blavatsky and her colleagues in the cultural field. In this connection, the decision of a conference of British Orientalists at Cambridge to institute an association on a permanent basis is to be welcomed. Committees will plan translations from the Oriental classics, and will promote other

schemes to extend knowledge of Eastern civilizations (*Times,* Aug. 23, 1947). It is to be hoped that the distinguished scholars concerned will profit by the mistakes of their predecessors. The pretensions of the literature of last century in this realm were (we are told) "the true reason, perhaps, why the outline of a few fundamental truths from the Secret Doctrine of the Archaic ages is now permitted to see the light, after long millenniums of the most profound silence and secrecy" (*S.D.*, I, xxii).

A *savant* whose devotion the committees might well emulate has just died in Brussels. He was Professor Franz Cumont. As a historian of religions he had few equals. His researches in Mithraism, and studies in Zoroastrianism as it developed in the Greek world, are monuments of learning. Astrology, hitherto considered unworthy of the attention of scholars, was another of his subjects. Together with some friends, Professor Cumont first made a survey of Greek astrological manuscripts in European libraries in 12 volumes, published the principal texts, and made ample use of them in a number of critical and expository works. One day Orientalists will find the courage to explore the rich erudition of H. P. Blavatsky's works, to their own benefit, and for the welfare of the world.

Creative Unity in Indian Thought

In an interesting radio broadcast (printed in *The Listener,* London, Sept. 18, 1947), Mr. John Irwin reviewed the three stages in the development of Indian figure-sculpture in historic times, from the Buddhist sculpture of the second and first centuries B.C. through the period when Indian iconography began in the second century A.D., to the sculpture of medieval India between the seventh and fourteenth centuries. Mr. Irwin makes it clear that there was nothing hieratic in early Indian art, and that the significance of the Buddhist element in it "is precisely that Buddhism came into existence as a revolt or protest against priestcraft and the whole priestly way of life." In the bas-relief carvings representing the varied life of ancient India—flowers, fruit and foliage, as well as men and animals—there is a feeling of deep kinship uniting all living things. "Everywhere the treatment is full of sympathy, kinship and affection." Only when the Buddha became elevated to divine status (Mr. Irwin remarks) did there arise in the second century A.D. the

popular demand for the image in worship, which, in sculpture, resulted in Indian iconography.

Buddha and Godlings in Art

Mr. Irwin mentioned the standardization of the Buddha image, with its *ushaisha,* the skull-protuberance. He did not refer to the large drooping ears seen on many portrayals, which are also a later innovation of the hieratic period, and are due to esoteric allegory:

> The unnaturally large ears symbolized the omniscience of wisdom, and were meant as a reminder of the power of Him who *knows and hears all,* and whose benevolent love and attention for all creatures nothing can escape. "The merciful Lord, our Master, hears the cry of agony of the smallest of the small, beyond vale and mountain, and hastens to its deliverance." (*S.D.,* II, 339.)

Mr. Irwin is wrong, however, when he identifies completely the Yakshas, Yakshis, and Nagas, carved on railings and gateways, with the age-old fertility spirits of village-India. In popular Indian folk-lore, the Yakshas were a class of demons who devoured men, just as Nagas are the Burmese *Nats,* serpent-gods, or dragon demons. In Esoteric science, however, the Yakshas "are simply evil (elemental) influences, who, in the sight of seers or clairvoyants, descend on men, when open to the reception of such influences, like a fiery comet or a shooting star." And, as for the Naga, he "is ever a wise man, endowed with extraordinary magic powers, in South and Central America as in India, in Chaldea as also in ancient Egypt," H.P.B. writes in the *Glossary.*

Yeats and Indian Philosophy

Another phase of Eastern thought was dealt with by Dr. B. Rajan (Fellow of Trinity Coll., Cambridge, and editor of *Focus*) in a radio talk on the general influence of Indian philosophy on William B. Yeats's creative genius. He quoted the following passage from one of Yeats's essays, where the famous Irish poet helps us to define his feeling for Indian thought:

> The Indian . . . approaches God through a vision, speaks continually of the beauty and terror of the great mountains, remembers with delight the nightingale that disturbed his meditations by alighting on his head and singing there, recalls after many years the whiteness of a sheet, the softness of a pillow, the gold embroidery upon a shoe. These things are indeed "part of the splendour of the Supreme Being."

Dr. Rajan then went on to say that the interdependence of all things on each other (a theme constantly recurring in Yeats's deeper poems) is a characteristic note of Indian thought:

> "The quality of the infinite," Tagore reminds us, "is not the magnitude of extension, it is in the *adraitam,* the mystery of Unity. Facts occupy endless time and space but the truth comprehending them all has no dimension; it is One. Wherever our heart touches the One, in the small or the big, it finds the touch of the infinite." Now Tagore is a poetical, not a systematic thinker, and it would be unfair to his particular kind of discourse to press his remarks to too pointed a conclusion. But I think it is safe to infer that he is suggesting two things: first that this unity is meaningful only as it is experienced, and second that all facts are included within the experience of unity. What we may call the eternal side of Hindu religion is concerned with apprehending this underlying wholeness, and what we may call the practical side of it is concerned with allowing this wholeness to grow into the everyday actions which it animates and justifies. Conduct thus becomes the natural outcome of knowledge, and change the spontaneous expression of the changeless. There is no question of separating these phases, of dramatically opposing being to becoming, or of escaping from time by means of a spiritual rope-trick. These antitheses are fictions of the critical intellect; they dissolve in the presence of that ultimate experience which strips away these barren separations from the natural harmony they frustrate and conceal.

Western Reaction to Indian Thought

The full story of the influence of Indian thought upon the intellectual development of the West is still unfolding itself. Much remains hidden in the future. But the *antahkarana* established by the Theosophical Movement of the nineteenth century, between the higher *manas of Aryavarta* and the "personal" soul of Western man, continues as a potent force. If "only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in Eternity to his having lived," then the light which has come from "the land of the Aryas" has indeed conferred immortality upon such Western genius as has been porous to its rays. True, "*Kali Yuga* reigns now supreme in India, and it seems to coincide with that of the Western age" (*S.D.*, I, 377). Yet, the testimony of those who have entered the *Aryanimarga* path (holy four-fold path, the narrow way) lives on, and echoes of the *Aryasatyani* (the four truths of Buddhism) sound in

Western and Eastern hearts alike. Probably, only Indian spirituality, for instance, is able to appreciate fully the Christianity of Dostoevsky. Two new studies of the Russian writer have appeared in London—J. A. T. Lloyd, *Fyodor Dostoevsky,* and John Cowper Powys, *Dostoievsky* (1947)—and these are accompanied by a new standard edition of his works in the translation of Constance Garnett.

"THE INSUFFICIENT MAN"

Under this title, a reviewer in the London *Times Literary Supplement* (Sept. 20, 1947) remarks how hard it is for the Western world to comprehend Dostoevsky, who held that man suffers from a natural schizophrenia which is "but a parody of the spiritual schizophrenia of grace, which is also offered to him. In the acceptance of that alone can he achieve his destiny, and only in the full acceptance of the communion of Man does he become fully Man." But it is in his attitude toward suffering that Dostoevsky shows most clearly, perhaps, his antithesis to the generality of Western thought and his kinship with the Indian conception of *Dukha* (misery and pain) and its place in the "four-fold" path of holiness:

> To Dostoevsky's view it was unimportant to banish suffering from the world; it was certainly impossible, but—above all—it was undesirable. For the supreme good was humility; the supreme evil was pride, and, human nature being what it was, it was almost inconceivable that anyone who could rise carelessly and easily over all the hurdles of life could preserve himself from pride. Of all idolatries none is worse than that of him who worships at the altar of "the bitch-goddess, success."

"A STREETCAR NAMED SUCCESS"

From a modern "successful" playwright comes a forceful statement of the indispensability of struggle in human life. Tennessee Williams, whose *Streetcar Named Desire* is this year's *Voice of the Turtle* on Broadway, contributed a piece "On a Streetcar Named Success" to the New York *Times* Drama Section, Nov. 30, 1947, a few days before his play opened. Mr. Williams described his reactions to another opening, that of his *Glass Menagerie* three years ago, when he abruptly met Success. He found it, he says, depressing. After a short tussle with security, he could no longer believe in the sincerity of his friends, nor even feel pride in his play. He began to dislike it, "probably because I felt too lifeless inside ever to

create another." By way of escaping from an insufferable vacuum, he underwent a needed eye operation, and was encouraged to note that his friends, visiting him while he was "in pain and darkness," seemed to have "the ring of truth" in their voices again. Upon his recovery, he left for Mexico, where his public self, "that artifice of mirrors," did not exist. "Then, as a final act of restoration," he began work on the *Streetcar*.

"THE RIGHT CONDITION"

Mr. Williams goes on to affirm that—

> It is only in his work that an artist can find reality and satisfaction, for the actual world is less intense than the world of his invention and consequently his life, without recourse to violent disorder, does not seem very substantial. The right condition for him is that in which his work is not only convenient but unavoidable.
>
> This is an over-simplification. One does not escape that easily from the seductions of an effete way of life. . . . But once you fully apprehend the vacuity of a life without struggle you are equipped with the basic means of salvation. Once you know this is true, that the heart of man, his body and his brain, are forged in a white-hot furnace for the purpose of conflict (the struggle of creation) and that with the conflict removed, the man is a sword cutting daisies, that not privation but luxury is the wolf at the door and that the fangs of this wolf are all the little vanities and conceits and laxities that Success is heir to—why, then, with this knowledge you are at least in a position of knowing where danger lies.

"THE CATASTROPHE OF SUCCESS"

> You know, then, that the public Somebody you are when you "have a name" is a fiction created with mirrors and that the only somebody worth being is the solitary and unseen you that existed from your first breath and which is the sum of your actions and so is constantly in a state of becoming under your own volition —and knowing these things, you can even survive the catastrophe of Success!

The catastrophe of Success was unexpectedly underlined recently by the suicide of a young author whose first novel had achieved an immediate and phenomenal success, reaching a new high in financial rewards. If life was as complicated for Ross Lockridge, Jr. as *Raintree County* is for the reader, there were doubtless many facets to the author's defeatism, but his coming to the stopping-place of

Success must have had a share in overpowering his sense of responsibility toward Life itself. At Indiana University he had made the highest scholastic average recorded up to his time, and after studying in France and at Harvard he taught English at Boston's Simmons College from 1941 to 1946, working eight hours a day on his novel. (*Time,* Jan. 12.) When his work was selected as Book-of-the-Month (January), and he received a $150,000 award from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Lockridge may have come to feel that endurance was no longer necessary. Perhaps Tennessee Williams stated the case somewhat prophetically: "Security is a kind of death, I think, and it can come to you in a storm of royalty checks beside a kidney-shaped pool in Beverly Hills or anywhere at all that is removed from the conditions that made you an artist, if that's what you are or were or intended to be."

LIFE WITHOUT MOTION

Mr. Williams, in the *Times,* comes out strongly, if a trifle melodramatically—that, after all, is his field—for Insecurity as the background of a creative life. But taken on its face value, his current play must be considered far below his own standards, for *A Streetcar Named Desire* is too much the child of our times to suggest a courageous spirit in the face of Circumstances. The characters may seem lifelike until one notices that they are not *moving,* and are not thought capable of assuming any new position with respect to events. The play's pervading feeling is that tragedy, insanity, meaninglessness, and sordidness—especially the latter—will go on, but the human being does not. This reverse view of immortality accords ill with the playwright's professed philosophy of effort. This may be an individual instance of the "cultural lag," or it may be the lack of a real philosophy of immortality. Mr. Williams' insurance against security is modest—"The obsessive interest in human affairs, plus a certain amount of compassion and moral conviction." We submit that it will take *all one can reflect* of compassion and moral conviction to replace the desire for security with the "divine discontent" of a fully conscious and a consciously immortal existence—to state the goal in theosophical terms. Otherwise, and even though we cannot recommend his play, we think Mr. Williams has a point.

Children of "Padmapani"

The occult tradition that the Atlanteans were the children of *Padmapani,* the first divine ancestor of the Tibetans (as exoterically interpreted) has its anthropological significance in the fact that "The majority of mankind belongs to the seventh sub-race of the Fourth Root-Race—the [inland, true] Chinamen and their off-shoots and branchlets. (Malayans, Mongolians, Tibetans, Hungarians, Finns, and even the Esquimaux, are all remnants of this last offshoot.)" (*S.D.,* II, 178.) In our modern age, the fighting and trading West would do well to reflect that this spiritual progenitor "is considered now as the greatest protector of Asia in general, and of Tibet in particular"—just as in occult symbolism he is the Logos, both celestial and human. In Finnish Lapland there lives today a small tribe, the Scolt Lapps, who are the oldest unmixed people in Europe, and who also form part of *Padmapani's* children.

The Scolt Lapps

A Swiss writer and authority on Lapland has given a brief account of this strange and attractive people. (*Time and Tide,* London, Nov. 15, 1947.) Dr. Robert Crottet, Hon. Secretary of the Scolt Lapp Relief Fund, has written *Maouno,* a Lapland novel, and a book of Lapland legends is shortly due for publication. The Scolt Lapps live some 250 miles beyond the Polar Circle. "They speak an ancient form of Tibetan," he tells us, "and long ago must have wandered from that distant land." They were driven from their homes during the war, and lost nearly all they possessed, including the reindeer which are their mainstay. Sweden has promised assistance, and other countries are being asked to help this ancient people who "enshrine something rare and beautiful in the human past, of which we have only the faintest recollection."

Reverence for Life

Dr. Crottet emphasizes the fact that, unlike so many primitive races, the Scolt Lapps have rejected all efforts to bring them the comforts of our "civilization." They even refuse to have radio sets in their huts:

> The noise that comes from a box, they say, spoils the voice of the trees and the never-ending melody of the virgin forest. No wonder if nature, in return for their faithfulness, has preserved

> in them the old powers we generally call "second sight." Telepathy among them is a commonplace: it even enables them to make appointments with one another when they are miles apart. They dream of a place and time, and meet as easily as if they arranged it by telephone.

Their legends and nature-lore make them familiar, in their daily lives, with the things of the unseen world. Their reverence for all life is seen in their invariable treatment of all creatures, especially their reindeer, with respect and courtesy. Dr. Crottet writes:

> I even heard them talk to their reindeer in a strange, almost imperceptible voice, resembling a sigh, or a breeze in the trees. I tried it myself on my favourite reindeer and at once got an answer. And so we often talked together; but only the reindeer understood this secret language, this "second language" common to men and animals, dating from the youth of the world, when first the wind spoke to the trees.

SOUL POWERS AND "CIVILIZATION"

Mention has been made of telepathy as practised by these Laplanders. They possess also a remarkable faculty of being able to read characters and minds:

> A Scolt Lapp will look at you with his clear, transparent eyes—sometimes he will rub noses with you, so as to see you as closely as possible—and he will see your real face, your "second face" behind the mask.

Dr. Crottet mentions that a sceptical British friend who went with him to visit the Scolts could not understand how his unspoken wishes were so often fulfilled, until he realized that the Scolts were reading his thoughts. H. P. Blavatsky has remarked (in evidence that "all the gods, and religious beliefs and myths, have come from the north") that the Laplanders "call their corpses to this day *manee*" (*S.D.*, II, 774). Dr. Crottet confirms that, while we moderns may doubt if such a thing as an individual soul exists, the Scolt "sees it"; he has a tender relationship with the dead who have lost their superficial "mask," and have entered "a wiser country." There will be some who will understand Dr. Crottet's friend when he said he was "under the strange impression of having left wilderness and chaos in familiar Europe, only to find real civilization among the Scolt Lapps."

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